

**Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Child Support Enforcement**

**DCL-04-15**

**March 30, 2004**

**TO ALL STATE IV-D DIRECTORS**

**Re: Announcement of Section 1115 Demonstration Grant Applications**

Dear Colleague:

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) is pleased to announce a request for applications from State Child Support Enforcement Agencies applying for funding of demonstration projects authorized under Title IV-D and section 1115 of the Social Security Act (the Act).

**Federal Agency Contact Name:** Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Support Enforcement

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Section 1115 Demonstration Grants

**Announcement Type:** Competitive Grant - Initial

**Funding Opportunity Number:** HHS-2004-ACF-OCSE-FD-0002

**CFDA Number:** 93.564

**Due Date for Applications:** June 2, 2004

## **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) invites applications from State Title IV-D agencies for fiscal year 2004 funding of demonstration activities intended to add to the knowledge and to promote the objectives of the Child Support Enforcement Program under section 1115 and Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. Only State Title IV-D agencies or the umbrella agencies of which they are a part are eligible to apply for these grants.

Throughout the priorities, we note that faith and community-based organizations may be used as collaborators with the States in the proposed projects, as appropriate.

Applications will be screened and evaluated as indicated in this program announcement. Awards will be contingent on the outcomes of the competition and the availability of funds. For new grants in FY 2004, \$1,178,337 is available for all priority areas. The section 1115 funds awarded to each project will represent 29 percent of the total project costs. For the purposes of the demonstration project, the total expenditures will be treated as State expenditures under Title IV-D that will be reimbursed by the regular Federal match of 66 percent of expenditures for Title IV-D administrative activities. Grantees must provide at least five percent of the total approved cost of the project. If the grantee provides five percent of the total, the effective Federal share of the project becomes 95 percent. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF grant award under section 1115, regular Title IV-D Federal Financial Participation (FFP), and the State share. An example of the project budget for one possible grant award available under this announcement is provided below under Section III.3. Applicants must prepare a formal budget on the required

forms, as listed in IV.3, below. The proposed State five percent match must be identified on the budget forms.

The anticipated starting date for the new awards is September 30, 2004. Projects may run through the following dates: for Priority areas 1 through 5 and 8, February 28, 2006, a length of 17 months; for Priority Area 6, September 29, 2005, renewal upon successful progress until September 29, 2006; and, for Priority Area 7, September 29, 2005, renewal upon successful progress until September 29, 2007. The period of each award is also specified under each Priority Area.

#### **Priority Area 1:**

##### **Improving regular payments by NCPs through clearer, more effective orders.**

###### **1. Description**

Many non-custodial parents (NCPs) who fail to pay their child support had not appeared at the hearing at which the child support order is set. In these cases the court or agency issues a default order. One reason for this failure to appear is the often unclear or vague language used in the notice of the hearing and the order. Nearly everyone in State and local offices interviewed for the study conducted for OCSE, Administrative and Judicial Processes for Establishing Child Support Orders, commented that the clarity of notices and orders “could be improved.” This demonstration will test whether specified, clearer language in notices and initial orders reduces default orders (increases appearances in court by non-custodial parents (NCPs)) and leads to more cases in which the NCP makes regular and full payments.

In addition, a compilation of the frequency and conditions under which States send notices to NCPs shows great variation. It is unclear as to which schedule of notices is most effective in having NCPs make more regular payments: those sent routinely each month, or less frequently, e.g., quarterly, or only if the NCP often fails to pay. Do routine notices lessen the emphasis on the need to pay or serve as a regular, helpful reminder? The demonstration should compare, at two or more sites, clearer language and the frequency of notices sent after the order has been established. The goal of the demonstration is to draft clearer orders and set the most effective frequency of notices as parts of a model that might be disseminated to other States.

**Funding:** A total of \$50,000 in section 1115 Federal funds is anticipated to be available for one project in this priority area. (Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$172,414 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds.) The amount provided for the project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

**Budget Period:** For Priority Area 1, the budget period will be up to 17 months.

**Priority Area 2: Motivating NCPs (non-custodial parents) to comply with orders by involving them more at the earliest stages of support**

The study conducted for OCSE, Administrative and Judicial Processes for Establishing Child Support Orders, has raised the question of whether “in-person meetings...[result in] better compliance with child support order payments.... [Some staff] in States that hold in-person conferences note that such meetings offer the opportunity to educate the non-custodial parent (NCP) about the child support process and obtain buy-in (by the NCP).... Other States suggested that such meetings are unnecessary...and...expensive.” (Page 7.)

Further, in some States, meetings are held immediately before the court appearance outside the courtroom; in other States, they are held at the child support agency days or weeks before the hearing. Often, the NCP or the CP fails to show up at these meetings. This demonstration will test whether requiring NCPs and CPs to participate in a meeting with agency staff early in the process of setting the order causes NCPs to “buy into” their commitment on behalf of their children by complying with the order and paying the amount due timely and in full. The experimental group will make the meetings a requirement. The demonstration should also control for factors such as the locale of the meetings (at the agency or outside the courtroom) and the timing of them (immediately before a scheduled hearing or weeks or days before). The demonstration should also measure and compare the costs and cost-effectiveness of the processes.

Funding: A total of \$100,000 in section 1115 funds is anticipated to be available for this priority area. OCSE anticipates funding two grants of approximately \$50,000 each.

(Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$172,414 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds.) The amount for each project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Budget Period: For Priority Area 2, the budget period will be up to 17 months.

### **Priority Area 3: Integration of Access and Visitation and Child Support Enforcement**

The Access and Visitation Program is aimed at increasing parent involvement but not necessarily increasing routine payments by the NCP. For Federal fiscal year 2005 and subsequent years, the President has proposed additional funds for States to increase their Access and Visitation funding. Under this proposal, in the five years beginning in 2005, the national Access and Visitation program funding will double to \$20 million annually, providing States with more funds to better target their programs strategically. Although the authorizing legislation does not require a program to integrate access and visitation and child support, this integration is allowed and might be desirable in assisting States in increasing regular and full payments through additional access and visitation or even just trying to address access and visitation problems.

This project would entail designing, implementing and testing an Access and Visitation program aimed at non-paying child support cases where the complaint is related to

child access, and providing appropriate access and visitation program services, securing child support locate information, and measuring subsequent child support outcomes and payment for the cases which have received access and visitation services. The results of this group should be compared to a similar group which did not receive access and visitation services.

Funding: A total of \$250,000 in section 1115 funds is anticipated to be available for this priority area. OCSE anticipates funding two grants of approximately \$125,000 each.

(Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$431,034 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds.) The amount for each project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Budget Period: For Priority Area 3, the budget period will be up to 17 months.

#### **Priority Area 4: Improving Case Referrals from the TANF Agencies to the Child Support Agency**

Receipt of child support is critical for TANF families in their attempts to achieve self-sufficiency. Depending on States' decisions, the TANF reauthorization provisions could allow the TANF family to retain more of the child support received for its use. A major problem in securing child support for TANF cases is the lack of good information

from the TANF agency about the non-custodial parent (NCP) and the NCP's current address. Research would be conducted on a sample of IV-A case data received by the IV-D agency to pinpoint where problems lie in terms of securing paternity establishments, child support orders and enforcement. For this demonstration the TANF and the Child Support agency in an urban area or other local area would work together to improve the procedures used by the IV-A agency in securing information up front from the TANF mother. The IV-A agency would provide information to the TANF applicant that cooperating with the child support agency will be beneficial to the custodial parent (CP) and the CP's children, especially with the new pass-through provisions. Also, the child support agency should use new hires or other electronic data to verify the addresses and names of IV-A referrals so that the child support agency can give immediate feedback to the IV-A caseworker and client if there are problems with the case. The child support agency should also immediately process valid names to secure paternity establishment, orders, and/or compliance to avoid further locate problems. The child support agency would give feedback to the IV-A agency on the result of actions and need for additional cooperation so that the IV-A worker receives feedback that actions have occurred because of her/his efforts.

Based on this analysis and processing, the IV-D and IV-A agencies should work out procedures to improve both IV-A intake and IV-D processing to improve TANF child support collections. The State or county IV-D agency would select one or more performance measures (paternity establishment, support order establishment, current collections, arrearage collections, or cost-effectiveness) and determine, in collaboration

with the TANF agency, whether changes in TANF intake methods, information and records gathering, caseworker duties and/or training, collaboration, customer service techniques, improved client education, improved use of new hires and other electronic information, or IV-A/IV-D interfaces, for example, have a positive effect on IV-D performance in TANF cases. Selected improvements would be demonstrated against control groups where no action was taken.

Funding: A total of \$200,000 in section 1115 funds is anticipated to be available for this priority area. OCSE anticipates funding two grants of approximately \$100,000 each. Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$344,828 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds.) The amount for each project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Budget Period: For Priority Area 4, the budget period will be up to 17 months.

**Priority Area 5: Increasing payments and avoiding non-custodial parents' (NCPs') debts through stratifying NCPs by likelihood of paying, taking steps appropriate to their classification, and taking prompt action.**

The goal of this demonstration project is to test interventions that increase payments by non-custodial parents (NCPs) and avoid the accumulation of their debt through early

action. These might include, upon opening of the case, (1) immediate contact with the custodial parent (CP) and NCP leading to stratifying NCPs into degrees of likelihood that the NCP will pay his/her child support promptly and the nature of the NCP's relationship with the CP, (2) differential arrangements depending on those factors, e.g., an agreement between the parties where they agree on the payment specifics, regular agency oversight where needed and close monitoring for uncooperative NCPs, (3) arrangements for prompt modification of orders when circumstances call for that step, and (4) reminders to the NCPs when payments are due when close monitoring is needed. The evaluation should compare the results of the group with the new techniques and a control group for whom the agency does not make any changes in its procedures.

Funding: A total of \$200,000 in section 1115 funds is anticipated to be available for this priority area. OCSE anticipates funding two grants of approximately \$100,000 each. (Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$344,828 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds.) The amount for each project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Budget Period: For Priority Area 5, the budget period will be up to 17 months.

**Priority Area 6: Demonstrating more effective interstate techniques to achieve improvements in interstate case processing in high volume metropolitan areas or between two States with high interstate case volume.**

Metropolitan areas with a high proportion of interstate cases or two States with a high volume of cases of non-custodial parents (NCPs) living in one State and working in another should work together to develop innovative case processing techniques and uniform procedures to increase compliance in interstate cases. One State should serve as the lead State to direct funding to the multiple States to conduct this demonstration. After the areas/States develop mutually agreed-upon innovations and procedures, they should apply them to one group of cases (the experimental group) and use old, standard procedures for another comparable group (the control group), in order to assess the demonstration's impact.

Funding: A total of \$200,000 in section 1115 funds is anticipated to be available for this priority area. OCSE anticipates funding two grants of approximately \$100,000 each, for each of the three years of the anticipated life of the project. (Under the matching formula, each total project budget would be \$344,828 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds each year.) The amount for each project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Budget Period: For Priority Area 6, this announcement is inviting applications for project periods up to three (3) years. Awards in FY 2004 will be for a one-year budget period; project periods may be for three (3) years. Applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the one-year budget period but within the three-year project period will be entertained in subsequent years on a noncompetitive basis, subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Government.

**Priority Area 7. Stabilizing the Paternity Establishment Participation (PEP) Rate and Improving Related Data Reliability**

Although in general the Paternity Establishment Participation (PEP) Rates have been acceptable, recently there has been a trend in some States of a declining rate or an unstable rate which has fluctuated widely between years. Also, a number of States have had difficulties with data reliability related to the PEP measurement. This project should be undertaken by a State with fluctuating PEP rates and/or difficulties with data reliability. It should address problems, improve data, and stabilize the PEP rate at an acceptable level.

This project should provide a model to guide other States which may be having similar difficulties. As such, issues should be addressed with relation to other States' problems as well as the individual State.

Funding: A total of \$50,000 in section 1115 funds is anticipated to be available for a project in this priority area. OCSE anticipates funding one grant of approximately \$50,000, for the two years of the anticipated life of the project. (Under the matching formula, the total project budget would be \$172,414 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds each year.) The amount for each project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Budget Period: For Priority Area 7, this announcement is inviting applications for a project period of up to two (2) years. Awards will be for a one-year budget period; the project period may be for two (2) years. Applications for continuation grants funded under this award beyond the one-year budget period but within the two-year project period will be entertained in subsequent years on a noncompetitive basis, subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the grantee, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Government.

**Priority Area 8: Projects furthering the child support mission to ensure that all children receive financial and medical support from their parents.**

Under this announcement, OCSE is looking for projects that are not covered by any of the above priority areas. OCSE is looking for projects that will test new interventions and approaches to increase paternity and support order establishments and

collections. Applicants would propose new ways of doing business, within Federal law and regulations, and put them into effect.

Funding: A total of \$128,337 in section 1115 funds is anticipated to be available for three grants in this priority area for approximately \$43,000 each. (Under the matching formula, the total project budget would be \$172,414 in State, Federal section 1115, and Federal Title IV-D funds each year.) The amount for each project depends on the level of effort needed to conduct it. OCSE reserves the right to fund the project at an amount and level of effort less than that proposed by the applicant.

Budget Period: For Priority Area 8, the budget period will be up to 17 months.

## **II. Award Information**

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Anticipated Total Funding Amount: \$1,137,338

Anticipated Number of Awards: 13-16

Ceiling on amount of individual awards (section 1115 funds): \$125,000

Floor on amount of individual awards (section 1115 funds): \$43,000

Average Projected Award Amount: \$43,000 to \$125,000

Project Periods for Awards: Priority Areas 1-5 and 8, 17 months;

Priority Area 6, three-year project periods with twelve-month budget periods;

Priority Area 7, two-year project periods with twelve-month budget periods.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

#### **1. Eligible Applicants:**

Eligible applicants for these section 1115 demonstration project grants are State (including District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands) Title IV-D or human services umbrella agencies only.

#### **Additional Information on Eligibility:**

All grant awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. The section 1115 funds awarded to each project will represent 29 percent of the total project costs. For the purposes of the demonstration project, the total expenditures will be treated as state expenditures under Title IV-D that will be reimbursed by the regular Federal match of 66 percent of expenditures for Title IV-D administrative activities. Grantees must provide at least five percent of the total approved cost of the project. If the grantee provides five percent of the total, the effective Federal share of the project becomes 95 percent. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF grant award under section 1115, regular Title IV-D Federal Financial Participation (FFP), and the state share. Applicants must prepare a formal budget on the required forms, as listed in IV.3, below. The proposed state five percent match must be identified on the budget forms. **Matching funds must be provided in cash; they may not be in-kind.**

An example of the project budget for one possible grant award available under this announcement is:

Source	Amount	% of Project Budget
Sec. 1115 Grant Award	\$ 50,000	29%
State Share	\$ 8,621	5%
Title IV-D administration FFP	\$113,793	66%
Total Project Budget	\$172,414	100%

Applicants should understand that funds awarded under this announcement may not be used for non-allowable Title IV-D expenditures, such as:

- significant (and costly, relative to the overall size of the project) enhancements to automated child support enforcement information management systems;
- significant physical space renovations, e.g., costs incident to physical co-location of large numbers of staff from two or more agencies; or
- expenditures, e.g., substance abuse treatment, normally borne by other funding sources, e.g., Medicaid or public health programs.

## 2. Cost sharing and Matching:

**Yes**, applicants must provide 5% of the total project cost; Federal funds under administrative costs of the Title IV-D program will constitute the remaining 66% of the project.

## 3. Other:

On June 27, 2003 the Office of Management and Budget published in the Federal Register a new Federal policy applicable to all Federal grant applicants. The policy requires all Federal grant applicants to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The DUNS number will be required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the government-wide electronic portal ([www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)). A DUNS number will be required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement and block grant programs, submitted on or after October 1, 2003.

Please ensure that your organization has a DUNS number. You may acquire a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line on 1-866-705-5711 or you may request a number on-line at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Applicants are cautioned that the ceiling for individual awards is \$125,000. Applications exceeding the \$125,000 threshold may be returned without review.

Applications that fail to include the required amount of cost-sharing will be considered non-responsive and will not be eligible for funding under this announcement.

#### **IV. Application and Submission Information**

##### **1. Address to Request Application Package**

Name:

Xavier Nelson

E-mail address: [xnelson@acf.hhhs.gov](mailto:xnelson@acf.hhhs.gov)  
Telephone Number: 202-401-5373  
Mail address: Xavier Nelson  
OCSE/ACF  
Aerospace Building  
370 L'Enfant Promenade  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor East  
Washington, DC 20447

**(This is not the Mailing Address for Submission of Applications, see Part IV. 6, below.)**

## 2. Content and Form of Application Submission

An original and two copies of the complete application are required. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by an authorized representative, have original signatures, and be submitted unbound.

The applicant should clearly **indicate in its application(s) for which specific priority area it is applying**. This information is necessary in order that the application be judged according to the priority description and in competition with other applications. Applicants may submit different applications covering different priority areas or they may submit different applications for different projects under one priority area; however, **they may not submit one application for the same project covering multi-priority areas**. The length of the application, excluding the application forms, certifications, and resumes, should be about 20 pages, double-spaced format

preferred. A page is a single-side of an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of plain white paper. (Applicants are requested not to send pamphlets, maps, brochures or other printed material along with their application as these are difficult to photocopy. These materials, if submitted, will not be included in the review process.) Each page of the application will be counted (excluding required forms, certifications and resumes) to determine the total length. **The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined under Part V, below.**

You may submit your application to us either in electronic or paper format. To submit an application electronically, please use the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) apply site. If you use Grants.gov you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off-line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

Please note the following if you plan to submit your application electronically via Grants.gov.

- Electronic submission is voluntary
  - When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.
- We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.

- To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a DUNS Number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in paper format.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included on the SF424 and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- Your application must comply with any page limitation requirements described in this program announcement.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. The Administration for Children and Families will retrieve your application from Grants. Gov.
- We may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.
- You may access the electronic application for this program on [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). You must search for the downloadable application package by the CFDA number.

### **Application Requirements:**

Each application must be submitted in accordance with the guidance provided below.

- a) The application must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant agency and to assume responsibility for the obligations imposed by terms and conditions of the grant award.
- b) If more than one State's agency is involved in submitting a single application, **one State agency must be identified as the applicant organization that will have legal responsibility for the grant.**

### **Forms and Certifications:**

The project description should include all the information requirements described in the specific evaluation criteria outlined in the program announcement under Part V. In addition to the project description, the applicant needs to complete all the standard forms required for making applications for awards under this announcement.

Applicants requesting financial assistance for non-construction projects must file the Standard Form 424B, "Assurances: Non-Construction Programs." Applicants must sign and return the Standard Form 424B with their applications. Applicants must provide a certification regarding lobbying when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000.

Applicants must sign and return the certification with their applications. Applicants must disclose lobbying activities on the Standard Form LLL when applying for an award in excess of \$100,000. Applicants who have used non-Federal funds for lobbying activities in connection with receiving assistance under this announcement shall complete a disclosure form, if applicable, with their applications. The forms (Forms 424, 424A-B; and certifications may be found at:

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm> Fill out Standard Forms 424 and 424A and the associated certifications and assurances based on the instructions on the forms.

### 3. Submission Dates and Times

Applicants may choose to mail applications or have them hand-delivered.

Deadline: The closing time and date for receipt of applications is 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time Zone) on June 2, 2004. Mailed or hand carried applications received after 4:30 p.m. on the closing date will be classified as late.

Late applications: Applications which do not meet the criteria above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition. Any application **received after** 4:30 pm on the deadline date will not be considered for competition. Applicants using express/overnight mail services should allow two working days prior to the deadline date for receipt of applications. (Applicants are cautioned that express overnight mail services do not always deliver as agreed).

Extension of deadlines: ACF may extend application deadlines when circumstances such as acts of God (floods, hurricanes, etc.) occur, or when there are widespread disruptions of mail service, or in other rare cases. A determination to extend or waive deadline requirements rests with the Chief Grants Management Officer.

Late applications: Applications that do not meet the criteria above are considered late applications. ACF shall notify each late applicant that its application will not be considered in the current competition.

ACF cannot accommodate transmission of applications by fax. Therefore, applications transmitted to ACF by fax will not be accepted regardless of date or time of submission and time of receipt.

See Section IV.6 for address information for application submissions.

Required Forms:

<b>What to Submit</b>	<b>Required Content</b>	<b>Required Form or Format</b>	<b>When to Submit</b>
Table of Contents	As described above.	Consistent with guidance in “Application Format” section of this announcement.	By application due date.
Abstract of Proposed Project	Brief abstract that identifies the type of project, the target population and the major	Consistent with guidance in “Application Format” section of this announcement.	By application due date.

	elements of the proposed project.		
Completed Standard Form 424	As described above and per required form.	May be found on <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm</a>	By application due date.
Completed Standard Form 424A	As described above and per required form.	May be found on <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm</a>	By application due date.
Narrative Budget Justification	As described above.	Consistent with guidance in “Application Format” section of this announcement.	By application due date.
Project Narrative	A narrative that addresses issues described in the “Application Review Information” and the “Review and Selection Criteria”	Consistent with guidance in “Application Format” section of this announcement.	By application due date.

	sections of this announcement.		
Certification regarding lobbying	As described above and per required form	May be found on <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm</a>	By application due date.
Certification regarding environmental tobacco smoke	As described above and per required form	May be found on <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm</a>	By application due date.
Certification regarding non-construction programs	As described above and per required form.	May be found on <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofs/forms.htm</a>	By application due date.

#### 4. Intergovernmental Review

This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,” or 45 CFR Part 100, “Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities.”

#### 5. Funding Restrictions

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this solicitation. Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

## 6. Other Submission Requirements

**Electronic Submission:** To submit an application electronically, please use the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) apply site. For complete details on how to submit electronically, please refer to section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Submission by Mail: Mailed applications shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are **received** on or before the deadline time and date at:

Administration for Children and Families

Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants

370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor West

Washington, DC 20447

**ATTN: Barbara Ziegler Johnson, Section 1115 Application**

Applicants are responsible for mailing applications well in advance, when using all mail services, to ensure that the applications are received on or before the deadline time and date.

Submission by Hand Delivery: Applications hand carried by applicants, applicant couriers, other representatives of the applicant, or by overnight/express mail couriers shall be considered as meeting an announced deadline if they are **received** on or

before the deadline date, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., (Eastern Time Zone), at:

**ACF Mailroom**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor (near loading dock)**

**Aerospace Building**

**901 D Street, SW.**

**Washington, DC 20024**

**Attention: Barbara Ziegler-Johnson, Section 1115 Application**

This address must appear on the envelope/package containing the application. ACF will not send applicants an acknowledgement of receipt for applications received during the application period

Questions may be directed to:

Barbara Ziegler-Johnson

Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants

Administration for Children and Families

370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor West

Washington, D.C. 20447

202-401-4646

[bziegler-johns1@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:bziegler-johns1@acf.hhs.gov)

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **1. Criteria**

#### **Instructions: ACF Uniform Project Description (UPD)**

The following are instructions and guidelines on how to prepare the “project summary/abstract” and “Full Project Description” sections of the application. Under the evaluation criteria section, note that each criterion is preceded by the generic evaluation requirement under the ACF Uniform Project Description (UPD). The UPD was approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Control Number 0970-0139, expiration date 03/31/04. The generic UPD requirement is followed by the evaluation criterion specific to this announcement.

#### **PURPOSE**

The project description provides a major means by which an application is evaluated and ranked to compete with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete and should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing your project description, all information requested through each specific evaluation criterion should be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Applicants are required to submit a full project description and shall prepare the project description Statement in accordance with the instructions and the specified evaluation criteria in the sections below. The instructions give a broad overview of what your project description should include while the evaluation criteria expand and clarify more program-specific information that is needed.

## **PROJECT SUMMARY ABSTRACT**

Provide a summary of the project description (a page or less) with reference to the funding request.

## **OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE**

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance must be demonstrated and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly Stated; supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to

provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the program announcement.

## **APPROACH**

Outline a plan of action which describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors which might accelerate or decelerate the work and State your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than others. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. For example, increased use of an interstate child support enforcement remedy (such as income withholding, tax refund offset) is projected to have quarterly results of a 5% increase in income withholding collections and a 5% increase in automated enforcement collections. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

If any data is to be collected, maintained, and/or disseminated, clearance may be required from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This clearance pertains to any "collection of information that is conducted or sponsored by ACF."

List organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

## **STAFF AND POSITION DATA**

Provide a biographical sketch for each key person appointed and a job description for each vacant key position. A biographical sketch will also be required for new key staff as appointed.

## **EVALUATION**

Provide a narrative addressing how the results of the project and the conduct of the project will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, State how you will determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project.

Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the conduct of the project, define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is

being conducted in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities on the project's effectiveness.

## **BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

### General

The following guidelines are for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both Federal and non-Federal resources shall be detailed and justified in the budget and narrative justification. For purposes of preparing the budget and budget justification, “Federal resources” refers **only to the ACF grant under section 1115** for which you are applying. Non-Federal resources are all other Federal **(including Title IV-D administration)** and non-Federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, Federal budget; next column(s), non-Federal budget(s), and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be a narrative.

### Personnel

Description: Costs of new employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known. For each staff person, provide the title, time commitment to the project (in months), time commitment to the project (as a percentage or full-time equivalent), annual salary, grant salary, wage rates, etc. Do not include the costs of consultants or personnel

costs of delegate agencies or of specific project(s) or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

### Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, FICA, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

### Travel

Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization (does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip, show the total number of traveler(s), travel destination, duration of trip, per diem, mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used, and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances.

### Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty,

protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation shall be included in or excluded from acquisition cost in accordance with organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested, provide a description of the equipment, the cost per unit, the number of units, the total cost, and a plan for use on the project, as well as use or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, which includes the equipment definition.

### Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

### Contractual

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Third-party evaluation contracts should be included under this category.

Justification: All procurement transactions shall be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. States are required to use Part 92 procedures.

### Program Income

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project.

Justification: Describe the nature, source and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

### Total Direct Charges, Total Indirect Charges, Total Project Costs

Self-explanatory.

### Assurance of Non-Construction

Application requesting financial assistance for non-construction projects must file the Standard Form 424B, "Assurances: Non-Construction Programs." Applicants must sign and return the Standard Form 424B with their applications.

### **Evaluation Criteria:**

Applicants should understand that OCSE will not award grants for demonstration projects which (a) duplicate automated data processing and information retrieval system requirements/enhancements and associated tasks which are specified in the Social Security Act; or (b) which cover costs for routine activities which would normally be reimbursed under the Child Support Program, e.g. adding staff positions to perform

routine CSE tasks, or by other Federal funding sources. Proposals and their accompanying budgets will be reviewed from this perspective.

Proposed projects will be reviewed using the evaluation criteria listed below:

To facilitate the review of applications, applicants should address each requirement in the priority area description under the appropriate section of the program narrative statement. The reviewers will determine the strengths and weaknesses of each application using the evaluation criteria listed below, provide verbal and written comments, and assign numerical scores to each application. The point value following each criterion heading is the maximum score for that criterion. All applications will be evaluated against the following criteria:

**Criterion I. Objectives and Need for Assistance (Maximum: 20 points).**

The application pinpoints the problem or issue requiring a solution and demonstrates the need for the assistance; states the goals and principal and subordinate objectives of the project; provides supporting documentation or other testimonies from concerned interests other than the applicant; identifies other successful demonstration projects that may have implications for the proposed demonstration (which may include a review of the relevant literature); identifies the conceptual or theoretical framework for this model; and describes whether the proposed project replicates or modifies previously evaluated model(s) addressing the identified need.

**Criterion II. Approach (Maximum: 20 points).**

The application outlines a sound and workable plan of action and time-line, and details how the proposed work will be accomplished; describes the approach in detail and points out its unique features; cites factors that might accelerate or delay this approach, giving acceptable reasons for taking this approach as opposed to others; describes and supports any unusual features of the project, such as extraordinary social and community involvement; includes an adequate staffing plan that lists key and support staff, consultants, and any agency, organization, other key group, and/or advisory panels involved or proposed; and describes the responsibilities, activities, and/or training plans for each (if applicable).

**Criterion III. Results or benefits expected (Maximum: 20 points).**

The application identifies the results and benefits to be derived, the extent to which they are consistent with the goals and objectives of the project, their contributions to policy and practice in promoting the objectives of the Title IV-D program listed in section 451 of the Act, and the extent to which the proposed project costs are reasonable in view of the expected results.

**Criterion IV. Evaluation (20 points).**

The application identifies the kinds of data to be collected and maintained, describes procedures for informed consent of participants, where applicable, and discusses the criteria to be used to evaluate the results of the project. The application describes the evaluation methodology to be used to determine if the process proposed was implemented, if the needs identified were addressed, and if the benefits expected were

achieved. Random assignment demonstrations are the preferred type of projects where they can be done. Through demonstrations using experimental and control groups, results are likely to be more definitive and therefore, the project will have clear value, whether or not it is successful. Independent evaluations are the normal and preferred evaluation arrangements for all projects. An independent evaluation contractor is an entity independent of the executive branch of State government (not including State universities). The evaluator should be qualified and experienced in evaluating experiments of the nature, design, scale, and duration of that proposed by the State.

Sound evaluations to determine whether or not project purposes have been realized are of importance to child support enforcement policy makers. Accordingly, careful attention should be paid to the evaluation component of the project application. Funding for the evaluation should also be estimated with this in mind. Funds allocated for evaluations should represent a meaningful share of the overall budget proposal. In order to demonstrate "meaningful share" the applicant should include an estimate that shows clearly the scope and level of effort of the proposed evaluation activity. A meaningful evaluation will show adequate budget allocations for such activities as local site data collection, training, sampling, if appropriate random assignment to experimental and control groups, if appropriate, and third party consultation on analysis and other aspects of evaluation.

**Criterion V. Organizational Profiles (Maximum: 10 points).**

The application identifies the educational and professional background of the project director and key project staff and the experience of the organization to demonstrate the applicant's ability to administer and implement the project effectively and efficiently.

**Criterion VI. Budget Narrative (Maximum: 10 points).**

The application proposes reasonable project costs and allocates sufficient funds appropriately across activities to accomplish the objectives.

The application describes the relationships between the proposed project and other federally assisted work planned, anticipated or underway by the applicant. If the project proposed is a collaboration, the application must describe the nature and extent of the collaboration, including the responsibilities of the respective agencies or organizations in carrying out the activities identified in the work plan.

**Notice of Possible Cross-site Evaluation**

While local evaluation of individual projects is a valued requirement for these projects, there is also the possibility that individual projects may be asked to gather and compile data in a manner that facilitates cross-site evaluation. It is anticipated that cross-site evaluations for some projects may be undertaken in this and subsequent years, using funds in addition to those referenced in this announcement. Applicants must agree to become part of, and fully cooperate with, cross-site evaluators, should OCSE undertake such an evaluation. Grantees should be prepared to meet with other grantees, Federal

officials, and the evaluator, as appropriate. If a cross-site evaluation is conducted, OCSE will bear the costs of it.

## 2. Review and Selection Process

Each application submitted under this program announcement will undergo a pre-review to determine that (1) the application was received by the closing date and submitted in accordance with the instructions in this announcement and (2) the applicant is eligible for funding. **It is necessary that applicants State specifically for which priority area they are applying.**

Applications which pass the initial ACF screening will be evaluated and rated by an independent review panel on the basis of specific evaluation criteria. The results of these reviews will assist the Commissioner and OCSE program staff in considering competing applications. Reviewers' scores will weigh heavily in funding decisions but will not be the only factors considered. Applications generally will be considered in order of the average scores assigned by reviewers. However, highly ranked applications are not guaranteed funding because other factors are taken into consideration. These include, but are not limited to, the number of similar types of existing grants or projects funded with OCSE funds in the last five years; comments of reviewers and government officials; staff evaluation and input; geographic distribution; previous program performance of applicants; compliance with grant terms under previous DHHS grants; audit reports; investigative reports; an applicant's progress in

resolving any final audit disallowance on previous OCSE or other Federal agency grants. OCSE will consider the geographic distribution of funds among States and the relative proportion of funding among rural and urban areas. The evaluation criteria were designed to assess the quality of a proposed project and to determine the likelihood of its success. The evaluation criteria are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application. Points are awarded only to applications which are responsive to the evaluation criteria within the context of this program announcement.

Federal reviewers will be used for the review process.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **1. Award Notices**

The successful applicants will be within 90 days of the application deadline date notified, by postal mail, through a cover letter signed by the Commissioner, OCSE, attaching the issuance of a Financial Assistance Award document which will set forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The Financial Assistance Award will be signed by the Grants Officer.

States whose applications will not be funded will be notified in writing by OCSE.

## 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

45 CFR Part 92

## 3. Reporting

Programmatic Reports: Semi-Annually

Financial Reports: Semi-Annually

Reporting Requirements:

All grantees are required to submit semi-annual program reports; grantees are also required to submit semi-annual expenditure reports using the required financial standard form (SF-269) which is located on the Internet at:

<http://forms.psc.gov/forms/sf/SF-269.pdf>. A suggested format for the program report will be sent to all grantees when the awards are made.

## **VIII. Agency Contacts**

For copies of forms and the announcement, contact:

Xavier Nelson

ACF/OCSE

370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., Washington, DC 20447

(202) 401-5373, FAX (202) 205-4315; e-mail, [xnelson@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:xnelson@acf.hhs.gov).

For questions regarding application development, forms, or program concerns regarding the announcement contact:

James H. Rich

ACF/OCSE

370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20447

(202) 401-3447, e-mail, [jrich@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:jrich@acf.hhs.gov)

For questions regarding application submittal or other grants management concerns, contact:

Barbara Ziegler-Johnson

Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants

Administration for Children and Families

370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W., 4<sup>th</sup> Floor West

Washington, D.C. 20447

202-401-4646

[bziegler-johns1@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:bziegler-johns1@acf.hhs.gov)

## **VIII. Other Information**

Funding Reconsideration:

After Federal funds are exhausted for this grant competition, applications which have been independently reviewed and ranked but have no final disposition (neither approved nor disapproved for funding) may again be considered for funding. Reconsideration may occur at any time funds become available within twelve (12) months following ranking. ACF does not select from multiple ranking lists for a program. Therefore, should a new competition be scheduled and applications remain ranked without final disposition, applicants are informed of their opportunity to reapply for the new competition, to the extent practical.

Date: March 30, 2004 \_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_

**Sherri Z. Heller, Ed.D.**

**Commissioner**

**Office of Child Support Enforcement**